

brain almost refused to accept what her eyes beheld:

"Beloved Dick: Don't hate me for compelling you to make this trip, but I am frantic with jealousy of Gloria, and if you fall me I will do something desperate. Your adoring and once adored

Gloria dropped on a marble bench while the ground seemed to be shaken beneath her. So Freneau had planned to make a journey with Lois! It was plainly at Lois' demand, yet he had consented and arranged to go. The story Frank Mulry told her had been a lie, too. Freneau had had an affair with Lois, with the wife of Gloria's own brother!

This treachery in her own household was like a nausea; it sickened her. She turned to Royce, no longer demanding, but appealing: "In heaven's name tell me the truth."

Royce felt that the time was over for deception. The truth could not hurt Gloria worse than appearances. "You shall have the truth, Gloria, or as much of it as I know. I tried to keep it from you because you were ill and you were young and I was afraid that the ugly reality would kill you. While you were still very ill with pneumonia I stumbled on the fact that Freneau was carrying on an affair with—the woman, the wretched woman who wrote that letter. I happened to overhear him tell her to meet him at midnight at the pavilion near the monument. I had known that he was a scoundrel, and had always been a rone. But you had loved him, so I had begged him to play fair with you. And he had promised.

"When I heard him make that rendezvous with—with that woman, I went right to him and told him that I knew of his vile scheme. I demanded that he break off the affair. Besides, the woman's husband was one of my dearest friends and I wanted to protect his home as well as your heart.

"Freneau laughed at my earnestness and ridiculed me, resented my interference, called me meddler and a busybody. I told him I would prevent his treachery at all costs. I took my revolver with me. I didn't mean to kill him. The revolver was not even loaded. But I intended to frighten him with it.

"I never dreamed, of course, that the binoculars I gave you to amuse yourself with would give you a sight of the whole tragedy. I waited and waited for Freneau to appear. At last I walked down the drive expecting to meet him. I found his body lying in the snow. I knelt down and listened to his heart. It was still. He was dead beyond all rescue.

"I saw that envelope in his pocket. I didn't know what was in it, but was afraid of what it might contain. I imagined the police discovering him and the newspapers publishing what was found on his person. Before I realized what I was doing I took the envelope. I saw somebody coming along the drive. I didn't know who it was. I don't know now, but I ran away.

"When I got back to my office I got word that your nurse had called me. I ran to your house. You told me you had seen the murder done. You had seen me without recognizing me. I told you it was a delirium like the other you had had. I looked through the binoculars. When I went out on the drive Freneau's body was gone. I was dumfounded. I almost believed that I had imagined the whole thing myself.

"I went to the pavilion. There I saw a woman, the woman, waiting for Freneau. I told her that he had been



"Don't Tell Me Any More Lies, Judge!"

Killed. She was frantic with grief. I sent her home and went back to you. You were in a state of hysteria. I gave you a drug to keep you from losing your mind.

"I had no idea then, and have none now, as to the murderer's name or the name of the man who took the body away. I had never seen this man Trask till you pointed him out to me. I can't imagine what grudge he had against Freneau or whether he disposed of the body or not. He is your captive now, and I intend to do all I can to get the truth from him.

"I ought never to have tried to deceive you, even for your own good. The truth is a dangerous thing to tamper with. I see it now, but my only guilt was a longing to protect you. It was my love that led me to hoodwink you, and now my love must bear the punishment."

Gloria's mind was not too busy with its own thoughts to heed the profound devotion of his tone. Her heart softened toward him a little, and once

more Freneau was on trial before her soul. But all she said was:

"The night court! Judge Freeman let Trask go. He tried to persuade me not to pursue him again. What reason did he have? He must have known Trask. He's got to tell the truth."

Royce disclaimed all knowledge of Judge Freeman's actions, or his motives. He saw Judge Freneau coming into the driveway in his car. He saw the judge's daughter, Lois, greet him.

Gloria saw him, too, and she did not wait. She glared at Lois with savage distrust and curtly demanded a word from the judge. She beckoned to him and walked away, and the old jurist followed her like a guilty lad going to his punishment.

Gloria moved away to a secluded bench in a bowered nook, an exquisite Grecian inclosure more suited to a courtship than to an inquisition into a crime. Gloria motioned the judge to sit down. She made sure that nobody was within sight or hearing, then she threw off all pretence of respect for age and, seizing the old man by the lapels of his coat, commanded him:

"Now you shall speak. You are going to tell me why you let the murderer of Dick Freneau go free. You are going to tell me what you know about him. I can only think of one reason. You know that your daughter was going to run away with him and you had him put out of the way. It was you and nobody else that hired Trask, and that is why you sent him away when he happened to be brought into your court."

Judge Freeman smiled drearily at the accusation. He shook his head.

"No, Gloria, my child, you can't fasten a murder on me, and once more I advise you to keep your pretty fingers out of the fire. If you don't you'll destroy somebody who is very dear to you."

"Don't tell me any more lies, judge, or you'll burn your own fingers. You don't know how much I have found out. You'd better tell me what you know or you'll destroy your own daughter, for David will divorce her when he learns how false she has been to him."

"David knows! David knew!" the judge retorted, driven to bay by Gloria's manner.

Gloria laughed at this. "Do you suppose that my brother would tolerate her presence here at his side if he knew? Look! there they are together." She pointed to a distant hilltop where David stood with his arm about his wife. The judge rose and glanced at the couple, then sank back with a groan.

"He has forgiven her, perhaps, because he feels that he has committed as great a crime as hers."

Gloria was infuriated at this attack on her brother.

"It's outrageous of you to try to besmirch the best that lives. He has been blind to your daughter's treachery, but that is his only fault."

"He has not been blind. He knew!" the judge insisted. "Listen, Gloria. On the night of the murder I met your brother at a club. He was greatly excited. I said, 'What are you doing here? You told me and you told Lois that you were going South for a week.' David was like a madman. He said: 'I only pretended to go.' He took a letter from his pocket and beat it with his hands. 'I've had an anonymous letter sent to me,' he said, 'and it's put me on my guard. If what it says is true, I've got to kill a man.' I tried to calm him, but a club bore came up, and while he held me David got away."

"I was frightened. I hurried from the club. I went to his house. He was not there. The butler said that Lois had left the house alone and walked toward the drive. She had told me she was going out of town. I had seen her baggage leave the house. I walked over to the drive. I found Freneau's car with a smashed wheel. The chauffeur said that Freneau had left it and walked north some time before. I hurried on."

"In front of the monument I stumbled over Freneau's body. I knelt down. He was dead. I nearly lost my mind with horror. Evidently David had followed him up, had met him, and killed him, leaving the body for the first policeman to find."

"It was late and cold and the drive was deserted. As a judge, I had seen so many families ruined by some mad act, I could only think of one thing, the legal rule that the corpus delicti, the body of the dead man, must be produced or its existence proved. The insane inspiration came to me that if I could get rid of that body I could save poor David from going to the chair, I could save my poor daughter from being disgraced before the whole world. I love David and love Lois, of course. They are my children. Neither of them realized the hideous consequences. Lois is my only daughter. She was born with a frivolous soul. She couldn't help it. Her mother died as your mother did, before she could guide or control the young heart. David is a splendid man; he loves Lois to distraction. He felt that his honor could only be cleansed of its stain by the blood of Freneau. He was the guilty dog. He led my daughter astray. He played with your trust. He was a black-hearted—"

"Stop!" Gloria cried. "It's cowardly to lay all the blame on the one who cannot defend himself either with lies or truth."

The judge sighed and went on: "Well, let the guilt lie where the Lord will place it. All I know was that I had heard your brother threaten to kill a man and that I found the man dead a little later. All my honor and responsibility as a judge was forgotten in the first law of a father, to protect his children from the world."



"I Found the Man Dead!"

"I am old and I will take what blame is mine or my children's. I lifted the body of Freneau and dragged it back of the monument. A policeman went by yawning and noticed nothing. I dragged the body down the steep steps and along the winding pathways, down to the railroad tracks, and across them to an old dock."

"Not a human being was in sight. I rolled the body off into the water. There was a splash and then I turned and climbed the hill and went home. I telephoned Lois. She answered me and said that I had wakened her from her sleep. I asked if David was there. She said that she had taken him to the train. The next day I learned that he had come back, saying that he found the journey unnecessary."

"I lived in agony for a week. Then Freneau's body was found in the lower bay, where the current had taken it. The papers said he had committed suicide because of financial troubles. It seemed best to let the secret go. What could it profit anybody to tell the truth now?"

"When they told me that you had seen the murder done I was aghast. Evidently you did not see me drag the body away. When you pointed out Trask in the night court, I could only believe that you had been mistaken in



"I Told Her He Had Been Killed!"

the man, or that David had hired him. I had not the courage to hold him and let him speak, so I added one more shame to my malfeasance in office.

"And now you know all that I know. Trask is here, David is here. If you want your brother accused in the open court of murder, if you want your family in the headlines of all the papers, then go ahead, turn Trask over to the police and I will take my punishment with the rest."

He walked away heavily as if the burden of life were breaking him down. Gloria stood in a daze, her mind picturing the catastrophe that must overtake the family if she were to speak.

The world was very beautiful, especially here in this paradise. She saw David with Lois. Her heart quivered at the thought of exposing him to public shame. She thought of him cowering in a cell in the death house because of her determination to avenge a lover of most doubtful honor.

She put off the decision till she could decide what to do. But one thing she could do without bringing down public ruin; one thing she must do, and that was to drive from this paradise the evil woman Lois, who poisoned the very air.

She saw a servant approach David and Lois; then David hurried to the house. He had been called to the telephone, perhaps. Lois sat down to wait for him. An irresistible and very womanly impulse sent Gloria straight toward her. Lois looked up with a smile as Gloria approached. Lois was happy. She had been wicked and escaped punishment. She had repented and been enabled to keep what she had lost the right to possess. Her husband did not know of her guilt; he was no longer jealous. And Doctor Royce was about to restore to her those letters of

hers which were an eye-lasting danger to her till she could regain them and make sure of their destruction.

Her smile faded as she saw the look of wrathful contempt in Gloria's eyes. Then she caught a glimpse of that fateful envelope which she had last seen in Doctor Royce's hands. How could Gloria have obtained it? Of all people in the world, Gloria was most to be dreaded with those letters in her possession. Lois' heart began to pound, her mind told her to run, but her knees could not even uphold her.

Gloria wasted no time on prefaces. She said: "I see that you recognize these letters. Shall I give them to David now, or have you anything to say first?"

"What shall I say? What can I say?" Lois stammered.

"You might begin with the truth. What was Dick Freneau to you?"

Lois shivered at having to make confession before such a court, for Gloria was young and clean-minded and she could not understand the trials and tribulations of a woman like Lois. And Gloria, too, had been wronged. Her lover had been killed in his sins. Lois realized what a hateful face vice wears when its pink domino is ripped from its snail.

But Lois told her story, justifying herself by laying all the blame on Freneau or on Gloria. She told how Freneau had won her heart in Florida, but he had been poor and David had won her from him with his wealth. Then she made the old excuse, that David had neglected her for his ambition and had left her a prey to Freneau's fascinations. Freneau had made her utterly his and led her into the depths of guilt only to cast her off when Gloria appeared in all her panoply of youth and innocence and idolatry.

She told Gloria that Freneau had protested to her that he did not love Gloria, but only wished to marry her to save himself from bankruptcy and poverty.

This was an unwise confession, for Gloria was revolted by the profanation of her love. She did not believe the charge. She cried out hoarsely that it was a black falsehood. Lois persisted that it was true. But she had lost the tone of contrition and Gloria had lost all power of mercy.

When Lois finished her story and told of Freneau's plan to elope with her, Gloria's heart was hard as marble. Lois made her final plea:

"I have sinned, but I have atoned, and David trusts me. Give me back the letters and let our lives go on in peace."

Gloria looked at her in wonder, and sneered:

"You don't ask much of life, do you? You have the love of two men; bring one to death and one perhaps to crime, and then you say: 'Don't let any harm befall me. I must keep everything!' You act a little too much, Lois."

Lois stared at her in amazement.

"You don't mean that you are going to tell David what I have told you?"

"Yes."

"And wreck our lives together?"

"That is for him to decide. He shall have the truth, and then he can do what he pleases."

"You will give him the letters?"

Gloria nodded grimly. Lois stood wavering in despair. The silence was pierced by the distant cry of a locomotive's whistle. An express train was coming round a far-off curve. It would sweep down the tracks that ran at the foot of the Stafford estate, along the edge of the river.

Lois harkened a moment, then the engine shrieked again. She made her wild decision.

"Give him the letters, then. It won't matter to me."

She turned and ran down the long terraces sloping to the embankment that hid the trains from view. Gloria had often paused on the edge of it to watch the train rush terribly past. She understood Lois' full purpose. Whatever and whosoever the guilt, there had been tragedies enough. Lois must not die.

She ran after her calling, calling. But Lois was far ahead of her and the train was rushing with terrible speed to the meeting place.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



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SCOTLAND NECK,

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COUNTY TAX SALE

I will sell at the Court House door at Halifax, N. C., on the 4th, day of June 1917 the following described land to satisfy taxes and costs for the year of 1916.

SCOTLAND NECK TOWNSHIP

James Anthony, 1 acre of land, Mary's Chapel, taxes and cost	\$ 1.17
Stephen Anthony, 1 acre of land, Mary's Chapel, taxes and cost	4.23
Millie Anthony, 5 acres of land, Mary's Chapel, taxes and cost	2.62
H. H. Arrington, 2 town lots, taxes and cost	15.78
Emily J. Baker, 7 acres (Millie Smith) taxes and cost	3.59
James O. Baker, 7 acres (Henry Arrington) taxes and cost	6.03
John Covington, 1 acre near town, taxes and cost	6.99
Melvina Cotton, 6 acres near town, taxes and cost	3.45
Cornelius C. Clark, 10 acres (Lizzie Smith) taxes and cost	4.97
Sam C. Clark, 19 acres (Millie Smith) taxes and cost	3.95
Sallie Clark, 2 acres (Mary's Chapel) taxes and cost	1.66
Hattie Dance, 1 town lot, taxes and cost	6.29
John Hardy, 15 acres (Mike Hardy) taxes and cost	3.45
Tom Hardy, 16 acres (Mike Hardy) taxes and cost	3.15
Eliza Hyman, 4 acres (Mary Chapel) taxes and cost	3.16
Lynn Hedgepeth, 4 acres (Bakers) taxes and cost	9.47
Caroline Harvey, 4 acres (Graball) taxes and cost	2.62
General Jones, 38 acres (Bakers) taxes and cost	10.28
Mary Ann Jones, 60 acres (Jim Howard) taxes and cost	6.97
George A. Johnson, 38 acres (Graball) taxes and cost	11.92
T. J. Johnson, 1 town lot, taxes and cost	4.00
George M. James, 38 acres (Graball) taxes and cost	6.94
James Isaac James, 1 town lot, taxes and cost	8.96
Melvina Mitchell, 5 acres (Mary's Chapel) taxes and cost	2.16
Deila McMillian, 3 acres (Mary's Chapel) taxes and cost	3.22
Ben Purrington, 5 acres (Mary's Chapel) taxes and cost	7.96
Henry Pitt, 3 town lots, taxes and cost	5.63
Clara Pitt, 7 (Millie Smith) taxes and cost	2.16
Nannie Shields, 1 acre (Mary's Chapel) taxes and cost	1.20
Isaac Spruell, 2 acres (Mary's Chapel) taxes and cost	2.97
Tom Spruell, 22 acres (Bakers) taxes and cost	5.63
Charlotte Simmons, 2 town lots, taxes and cost	11.29
Wright Station, 1 acre (Julia Baker) taxes and cost	4.08
Tom and Norman Smith, 17 acres (Andrew Smith) taxes and cost	3.50
Tom Smith, 2 acres (Mary's Chapel) taxes and cost	1.66
Dempsey Smith, 1 acre (Mary's Chapel) 2 years taxes and cost	6.23
Joe Sandy Smith, 1 town lot, taxes and cost	6.97
Nicholas Smith, 9 acres (Mary's Chapel) taxes and cost	5.87
Nathan L. Smith, 2 acres (Gamberry) taxes and cost	6.92
Lizzie Davis Taylor, 1 acre (Graball) taxes and cost	1.62
E. A. and Willie Taylor, 63 acres (Bakers) taxes and cost	8.95
Dave White, 4 acres (Mary's Chapel) taxes and cost	4.28
Lewis Wiley, 1 acre near town, taxes and cost	4.98
Jennie Williams, 9 acres (Isaac Smith) taxes and cost	2.97
Charles Webb, 2 acres (Strickland Land) taxes and cost	7.25
George Ward, 78 acres (Martha Smith) taxes and cost	13.25
Frank Ward, 2 town lots taxes and cost	12.97

CONOCONARA TOWNSHIP

Georgiana Artis, 3 acres (Tillery) taxes and cost	3.10
E. L. Davis, 2 acres (Wilkinson Land) taxes and cost	6.56
Lee Hale, 3 acres (Residence) taxes and cost	7.18
Turner Hines, 20 acres (Pines Woods) taxes and cost	4.98
Mattie Jackson, 29 acres (Piney Woods) taxes and cost	3.12
Silas Jones, 33 acres (Piney Woods) taxes and cost	6.73
John Tillery, 83 acres (Residence) taxes and cost	11.74
Joe Tillery, 4 acres (Residence) taxes and cost	6.97
Tom Tillery, 3 acres (Residence) taxes and cost	6.66
John Tillery, 10 acres (Residence) taxes and cost	5.26
Dempsey Bryant, Estate, 20 acres (Piney Woods) taxes and cost	4.13

J. E. SHIELDS, Tax Collector, Scotland Neck and Conoconara Townships.

PALMYRA-COLORED

Bryant Smith, 250 acres, (Burrell Land)	40.63
Allen Mabry, 73 acres (Pocason Land)	3.57
Tom Harris, 2 acres, (Piney Woods)	4.52

W. C. ALLSBROOK, Tax Collector for Palmyra Township.